
COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Executive Order No. 57 (2013)

Establishing the Governor's Rural Jobs Council

Importance of the Issue

Economic opportunity and free enterprise is the bedrock of a stable and prosperous Commonwealth. Virginia is home to abundant resources, fiscal responsibility and boundless human potential, giving rise to the entrepreneurial spirit evident throughout this great Commonwealth. However, in light of the unprecedented economic difficulties facing Virginia families and businesses, and the ever increasing competitiveness of the global economy, bold and innovative ideas are necessary for the Commonwealth to continue to succeed.

Virginia's rural communities are some of the most naturally abundant regions in the Commonwealth. From the Eastern Shore to the highlands of southwest Virginia, it is clear that Virginia is blessed with a wealth of natural beauty and resources. These many opportunities make Rural Virginia a destination for major companies, home to two Virginia's two largest industries, Agriculture and Forestry, and an inviting place to start and grow a small business. The entrepreneurial spirit is strong in our rural communities and generated much prosperity over many generations.

The Commonwealth is fortunate to benefit from pro-growth policies that continue to spur economic development and job creation and Virginia's unemployment rate continues to remain low, second lowest east of the Mississippi. While that news is welcomed, we must continue to do everything possible to support our rural communities that have not experienced the job growth seen in some other regions of the state.

The following measures are crucial steps to continue promoting economic recovery and job creation in Virginia with a focus on our rural communities.

Establishment of the Council

Building on the success of the Governor's Commission on Job Creation and Economic Development and the rural policy agenda, we must harness the unlimited potential in rural Virginia, to create greater opportunities. Accordingly, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor under Article V of the Constitution of Virginia and under the laws of the Commonwealth, including but not limited to Â§ 2.2-134 and 135 of the *Code of Virginia*, and subject to my continuing and ultimate authority and responsibility to act in such matters, I hereby establish the Governor's Rural Jobs Council.

Composition of the Council

The Governor's Rural Jobs Council shall receive the full staff support of the Chief Jobs Creation Office, the Deputy Secretary of Commerce and Trade for Rural Economic Development, the Secretaries of Commerce and Trade, Agriculture and Forestry, Natural Resources, Transportation, Technology, Finance, Education and Administration. The Council shall also include up to 15 legislative and non-legislative citizen members representing a cross segment of industry and business sectors. All agencies, as deemed necessary by the Secretaries of Commerce and Trade and Agriculture and Forestry, shall participate and provide assistance as requested. In addition, each executive branch agency and state entity that has a significant impact on rural Virginia shall designate one person to serve as a liaison to the Council. Further, I reserve the authority to designate any other such citizens as I deem appropriate to serve on the Council. The Virginia Economic Development Partnership and the Center for Rural Virginia shall provide staff support for the Council. The Governor shall appoint the chair and vice chair(s) of the Council.

Members of the Council shall serve without compensation.

Charge for the Council

The Council shall have the following responsibilities:

1. Identify impediments to and opportunities for job creation in Rural Virginia
2. Recommend strategies to improve the K-12 education and the workforce pipeline
3. Produce a comprehensive and meaningful Economic and Infrastructure Policy for Rural Virginia; and
4. Make recommendations to improve the tax and regulatory environment in the Commonwealth to maintain and increase the Commonwealth's standing as the best place to do business in the United States of America.

An estimated 500 hours of staff time will be required to support the council. An estimated \$2,000.00 in office materials is expected to fund the council. Such funding as is necessary for the term of the council's existence shall be provided from sources, including both private and appropriated funds, contributed or appropriated for purposes related to the work of the Council, as authorized by Â§ 2.2-135(B) of the *Code of Virginia*.

The Council shall provide its first report of recommendations and action items to the Governor no later than April 1, 2013. The Council shall thereafter provide periodic supplemental reports setting forth additional recommendations and actions items, and reporting on agency progress implementing the Council's recommendations adopted by the Governor.

Pursuant to Â§ 2.2-135 of the *Code of Virginia*, the Council shall remain in effect for a period of one

year.

Given under my hand and under the Seal of the Commonwealth of Virginia this 2nd day of January, 2013.

/s/ Robert F. McDonnell, Governor

Attest:

/s/ Secretary of the Commonwealth